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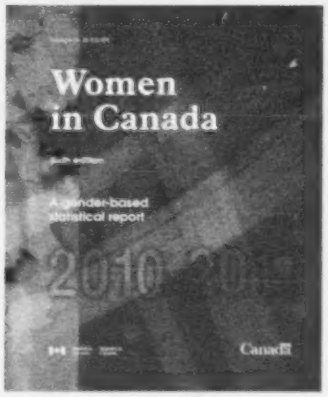

Female Population

by Covadonga Robles Urquijo and Anne Milan

July 2011

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Women in Canada: A Gender-based Statistical Report

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.	not available for any reference period
..	not available for a specific reference period
...	not applicable
0	true zero or a value rounded to zero
0s	value rounded to 0 (zero) where there is a meaningful distinction between true zero and the value that was rounded
p	preliminary
r	revised
x	suppressed to meet the confidentiality requirements of the *Statistics Act*
E	use with caution
F	too unreliable to be published

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Female population

by Covadonga Robles Urquijo and Anne Milan

Introduction

This chapter of *Women in Canada* introduces the socio-demographic and ethno-cultural characteristics of women and girls, many of which will be explored in greater detail in other chapters of this publication. Understanding the current trends related to an aging, and an increasingly diverse, female population can help inform policy and planning. Topics examined in this chapter include the distribution of the female population by age group, across the provinces and territories, and the share with an Aboriginal identity. In addition, aspects of diversity within the female population, including immigrant status and visible minority status, will be presented as well as residential mobility, language-related characteristics and religious affiliation and religiosity. Where appropriate, trends over time will be analyzed and comparisons will be drawn with the male population in order to highlight existing similarities and differences.

A slim female majority

Women and girls comprise just over half of Canada's population. In 2010, 17.2 million females accounted for 50.4% of the total population, continuing a slim female majority that has held for over three decades (Table 1). In the data recorded from 1921 to 1971, the percentage of males was slightly higher than that of females. In 1921, 48.5% of the population was female, rising to 49.8% in 1971. Over the past century, gains in life expectancy have benefited women more than men. Lower mortality rates for females throughout most of the life course contributed to a slightly higher share of females than males in the population. According to the medium-growth scenario of the most recent population projections, the female majority would continue for the next 50 years.[1]

1. Statistics Canada, 2010. *Population Projections for Canada, Provinces and Territories: 2009 to 2036*. Catalogue no. 91-520-X.

Table 1
Total population, Canada, 1921 to 2061

Year	Females		Males	Total
	thousands	as a % of the total population	thousands	
1921	4,258.3	48.5	4,529.6	8,787.9
1931	5,002.2	48.2	5,374.5	10,376.8
1941	5,606.1	48.7	5,900.5	11,506.7
1951	6,920.6	49.4	7,088.9	14,009.4
1956	7,928.9	49.3	8,151.9	16,080.8
1961	9,019.4	49.5	9,218.9	18,238.2
1966	9,960.5	49.8	10,054.3	20,014.9
1971[1]	10,935.6	49.8	11,026.5	21,962.0
1976[1]	11,726.5	50.0	11,723.4	23,449.8
1981[1]	12,468.7	50.2	12,351.2	24,819.9
1986[1]	13,148.9	50.4	12,951.4	26,100.3
1991[1]	14,133.0	50.4	13,904.4	28,037.4
1996[1]	14,959.9	50.5	14,650.3	29,610.2
2001[1]	15,653.4	50.5	15,365.6	31,019.0
2006[1]	16,428.2	50.4	16,147.9	32,576.1
2010[1]	17,191.5	50.4	16,917.3	34,108.8
Projections[2]				
2011	17,403.0	50.4	17,129.2	34,532.2
2016	18,387.8	50.4	18,106.1	36,493.8
2021	19,356.4	50.4	19,049.1	38,405.5
2026	20,316.3	50.4	19,971.4	40,287.7
2031	21,244.5	50.5	20,849.4	42,093.9
2036	22,136.4	50.5	21,685.3	43,821.7
2041	23,009.2	50.5	22,509.6	45,518.8
2046	23,877.2	50.6	23,346.7	47,224.0
2051	24,748.5	50.6	24,206.7	48,955.2
2056	25,637.4	50.5	25,101.5	50,738.9
2061	26,570.5	50.5	26,050.3	52,620.8

1. Estimates adjusted for net census undercoverage.
2. Projections are based on medium-growth scenario.

Sources:

Statistics Canada, censuses of population, 1921 to 1966; and Demography Division, 1971 to 2006; and *Annual Demographic Estimates: Canada, Provinces and Territories*. Cat. No 91-215-X, 2010; and *Population Projections for Canada, Provinces and Territories: 2009 to 2036*. Catalogue no. 91-520-X, 2011 to 2061.

Looking abroad, some countries had a female share even greater than Canada's. In Russia, Japan and France, among others, the female share of the population exceeded 51%; in countries such as Sweden and the United Kingdom, the share was closer to that of Canada. Women have a higher life expectancy than men and a higher percentage of females are observed in countries with the greatest sex differentials in life expectancy. In other countries, such as China (48.5%) and India (48.1%), less than half of the total population was female.[2]

While the overall share of females in the population has been fairly stable, the female population, similar to the male population, has grown in absolute numbers over the past century. And it is expected to continue to grow. According to the medium-growth scenario of the most recent population projections, by 2031, Canada may have 21.2 million women and girls; by 2061, 26.6 million.[3] This is up substantially from early in the last century: in 1921, there were 4.3 million females.

Age distribution

The female population in Canada, like the population in general, is aging. This is owing to a combination of factors including low fertility, increasing life expectancy, and the movement of the large baby boom cohort through the age structure. This large cohort, born between 1946 and 1965, was 45 to 64 years old in 2010: they made up about 28% of the overall female population in that year (Table 2). In fact, more women belonged to the 45-to-54 age group, 16%, than to any other 10-year age group.

Table 2
Population, by age group, Canada, 2010

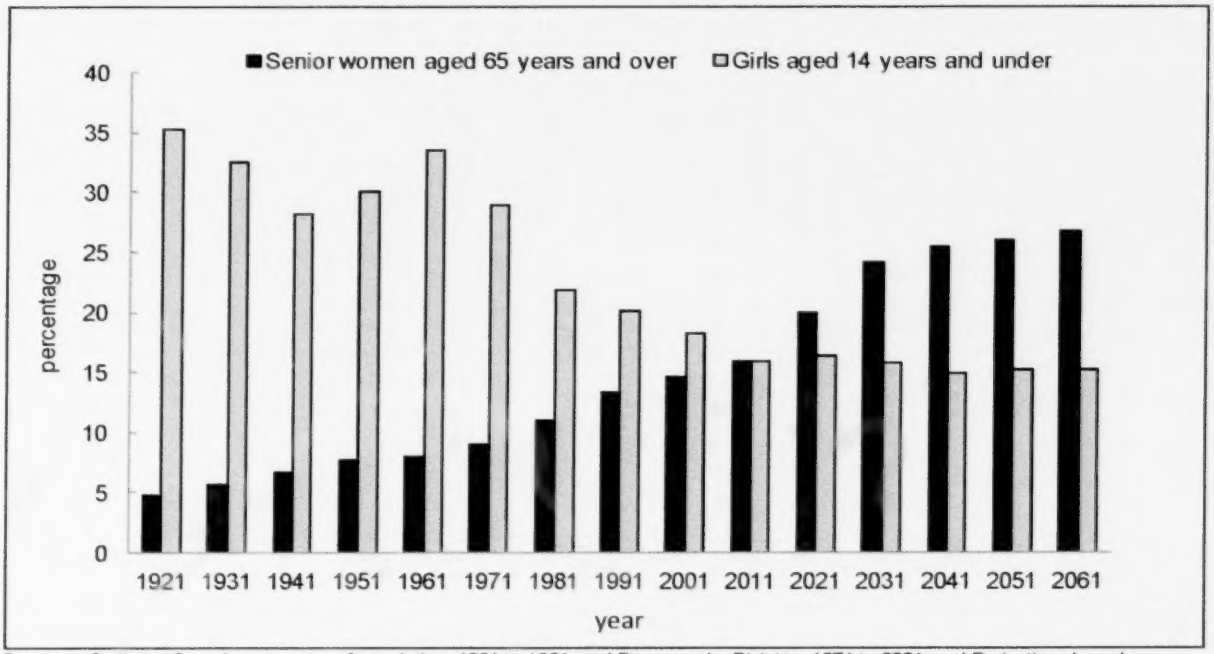
Age group	Females			Males	
	thousands	%	as a % of the age group	thousands	%
Under 5	914.7	5.3	48.7	963.4	5.7
5 to 14	1,818.1	10.6	48.6	1,920.4	11.4
15 to 24	2,236.9	13.0	48.7	2,354.8	13.9
25 to 34	2,333.1	13.6	49.7	2,362.8	14.0
35 to 44	2,343.0	13.6	49.7	2,372.7	14.0
45 to 54	2,700.3	15.7	49.9	2,711.8	16.0
55 to 64	2,163.8	12.6	50.8	2,093.2	12.4
65 to 74	1,341.4	7.8	52.1	1,232.1	7.3
75 to 84	904.6	5.3	56.5	696.0	4.1
85 and over	435.6	2.5	67.5	210.0	1.2
Total aged 65 and older	**2,681.6**	**15.6**	**55.6**	**2,138.0**	**12.6**
Total all age groups	**17,191.5**	**100.0**	**50.4**	**16,917.3**	**100.0**

Note: Adjusted for net census undercoverage.
Source: Statistics Canada, Demography Division.

2. U.S. Census Bureau. 2010 International Data Base of Population Estimates and Projections, Midyear population by age and sex. Website: http://www.census.gov/ipc/www/idb/region.php. Accessed Nov 29, 2010.
3. Statistics Canada, 2010. *Population Projections for Canada, Provinces and Territories: 2009 to 2036*. Catalogue no. 91-520-X.

Over time, the distribution of women and girls has been shifting to older age groups. As the shares of both senior women and women approaching their senior years grew over time, the share of girls decreased. In 2010, girls aged 14 years and younger accounted for 16% of the female population, identical to the 16% share of senior women aged 65 and older. In comparison, in 1971 young girls aged 14 years and younger accounted for 29% of the female population, more than triple the 8.9% share of senior women. In fact, population aging in Canada is expected to gain momentum between 2011 and 2031, as all people in the baby boom cohort reach their senior years (Chart 1). According to the medium-growth scenario of the most recent population projections, senior women may account for about one-quarter of the female population by 2036. In contrast, the share of girls is projected to remain relatively stable throughout the coming decades.

Chart 1
Senior women and girls as a percentage of the female population, Canada, 1921 to 2061



Sources: Statistics Canada, censuses of population, 1921 to 1961; and Demography Division, 1971 to 2001; and Projections based on medium-growth scenario (M1), Demography Division, Custom Tabulation, 2011 to 2061.

The overall female and male age distributions in Canada were similar in 2010, with slim but perceptible differences between the youngest age groups and wider differences between the oldest age groups. For example, 48.6% of children under age 10 were girls and 51.4% were boys. In fact the sex ratio at birth, on average, is 105 boys born for every 100 girls. There were roughly equal proportions of females and males in the under-65 age groups in 2010. However, females' greater life expectancy creates a growing disparity throughout the senior years, with women outnumbering men. For the total Canadian population aged 65 years and older, the proportion of women was 56% in 2010, increasing to 67% for those aged 85 and older and to 80% for centenarians. Since the late 1970s, however, gains in life expectancy have been more rapid for men than for women. If the gap in life expectancy continues to narrow, this could eventually result in a more balanced share of women and men in their senior years. See chapter on senior women for more information.

Female population across Canada

In 2010, more than three-fifths of the female population, and a similar share of the male population, were found in just two provinces: Ontario, 39%, and Quebec, 23%. An additional 13% and 11% of women and girls lived in British Columbia and Alberta, respectively (Table 3). These four provinces are the most populous in Canada.

Table 3
Population, by province and territory, Canada, 2010

Province and territory	Females			Males	
	thousands	%	as a % of the total provincial/ territorial population	thousands	%
Newfoundland and Labrador	259.8	1.5	51.0	249.9	1.5
Prince Edward Island	72.7	0.4	51.1	69.5	0.4
Nova Scotia	485.0	2.8	51.5	457.5	2.7
New Brunswick	382.9	2.2	50.9	368.9	2.2
Quebec	3,986.7	23.2	50.4	3,920.7	23.2
Ontario	6,700.3	39.0	50.7	6,510.4	38.5
Manitoba	620.3	3.6	50.2	615.1	3.6
Saskatchewan	525.0	3.1	50.2	520.6	3.1
Alberta	1,820.5	10.6	48.9	1,900.5	11.2
British Columbia	2,284.2	13.3	50.4	2,246.8	13.3
Yukon	16.9	0.1	49.0	17.6	0.1
Northwest Territories	21.1	0.1	48.3	22.6	0.1
Nunavut	16.0	0.1	48.3	17.2	0.1
Canada	**17,191.5**	**100.0**	**50.4**	**16,917.3**	**100.0**

Note: Adjusted for net census undercoverage.
Source: Statistics Canada, Demography Division.

In 2010, the percentage of the total population composed of females was highest in Nova Scotia (51.5%) and was at, or close to, 51% in the other Atlantic provinces. The slightly higher percentage of females in these provinces is likely related to an age structure that is older than that of Canada overall—given that women have a higher life expectancy than men, there are more women at older ages. In contrast, among the provinces, Alberta had the lowest percentage of the population comprised of females, 48.9%, perhaps reflecting the younger age structure in this province and possible in-migration of young adult men for employment opportunities. The territories also had younger age structures than the nation as a whole, largely the result of higher fertility levels. This may partly explain the lower percentages of females in the Northwest Territories (48.3%), Nunavut (48.3%) and Yukon (49.0%). The percentage of females in Quebec (50.4%) and British Columbia (50.4%) was the same as for Canada, while it was slightly higher in Ontario (50.7%).

Most of Canada's population lives in metropolitan areas. As of July 1, 2010, close to seven in ten females, 69.4%, resided in census metropolitan areas[4]. Some census metropolitan areas had a much higher share of females—Saint John, 51.6%, Victoria, 51.6%, Halifax, 51.5%, Peterborough, 51.4% and Trois-Rivières, 51.3% than did others (Table 4). The lowest shares of females in the population were found in the two Alberta census metropolitan areas: Calgary, 49.1%; and Edmonton, 49.2%. Again, the age structure of census metropolitan areas may be a key factor: Victoria, for example, had one of the highest proportions of seniors in 2010, while Calgary and Edmonton had among the lowest.

Table 4
Percentage of females in the population, by census metropolitan area, Canada, 2010

Census metropolitain area	percentage
Saint John, New Brunswick	51.6
Victoria, British Columbia	51.6
Halifax, Nova Scotia	51.5
Peterborough, Ontario	51.4
Trois-Rivières, Quebec	51.3
St. Catharines–Niagara, Ontario	51.1
Sherbrooke, Quebec	51.1
St. John's, Newfoundland and Labrador	51.0
Québec, Quebec	51.0
Toronto, Ontario	50.9
Ottawa–Gatineau, Ontario/Quebec	50.9
Moncton, New Brunswick	50.9
London, Ontario	50.8
Brantford, Ontario	50.8
Hamilton, Ontario	50.8
Greater Sudbury, Ontario	50.8
Kelowna, British Columbia	50.7
Montréal, Quebec	50.7
Regina, Saskatchewan	50.6
Oshawa, Ontario	50.6
Kingston, Ontario	50.6
Vancouver, British Columbia	50.6
Winnipeg, Manitoba	50.5
Thunder Bay, Ontario	50.4
Windsor, Ontario	50.4
Saguenay, Quebec	50.3
Guelph, Ontario	50.3
Saskatoon, Saskatchewan	50.2
Barrie, Ontario	50.1
Kitchener–Cambridge–Waterloo, Ontario	50.1
Abbotsford–Mission, British Columbia	49.9
Edmonton, Alberta	49.2
Calgary, Alberta	49.1

Source: Statistics Canada, Demography Division.

4 Census metropolitan areas are districts including ore or more neighbouring municipalities situated around a core, with a total population of at least 100,000 of which 50,000 or more live in the core.

Aboriginal identity[5]

A rising number of women and girls in Canada identify as an Aboriginal person. In 2006, 600,700 women and girls, or 3.8% of the total female population, reported an Aboriginal identity—First Nations (North American Indian), Métis or Inuit—up from 3.3% in 2001 and 2.8% in 1996 (Table 5). According to the medium-growth scenario of the most recent projections of the Aboriginal population, it is projected there could be 717,000 females with an Aboriginal identity in 2017.[6] The largest group of Aboriginal women and girls in 2006 was First Nations, at 60%, followed by Métis, 33%, and Inuit, 4.2%. As well, a small percentage of females reported multiple Aboriginal identities. For males, the percentage reporting an Aboriginal identity, and the distribution by Aboriginal group, was similar to females.

Table 5
Population with Aboriginal identity, Canada, 2006

Aboriginal identity	Females			Males	
	thousands	as a % of all females in Canada	as a % of Aboriginal female population	thousands	as a % of all males in Canada
First Nations (North American Indian)	360.0	2.3	59.9	338.1	2.2
Métis	196.3	1.2	32.7	193.5	1.3
Inuit	25.5	0.2	4.2	25.0	0.2
Other[1]	19.0	0.1	3.2	15.5	0.1
Total Aboriginal identity population	**600.7**	**3.8**	**100.0**	**572.1**	**3.7**

1. Includes multiple Aboriginal responses and Aboriginal responses not included elsewhere.
Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Population, 2006.

The Aboriginal female population grew 20% from 2001 to 2006, more than triple the 6% growth of Canada's overall female population. In those five years, among the Aboriginal female population, growth was highest for Métis (34%), more than double the growth among First Nations (14%) and Inuit (13%). Growth was similar among the Aboriginal male population. At least some of the Métis population growth may be related to more people identifying themselves as Métis in recent years.[7]

The Aboriginal female population is younger than the non-Aboriginal female population. The median age—which indicates the age at which 50% of the population is older and 50% is younger—of the female population with an Aboriginal identity was 27.7 years in 2006, compared with 40.0 years for the total female population. The median age for the male population was younger (25.2 years for the Aboriginal male population and 38.3 years for the total male population). Younger Aboriginal females account for a considerable share of the Aboriginal population distributed by age: 28% were aged 14 and younger in 2006 (as were 31% of Aboriginal males). An additional 18% of the Aboriginal female population was aged 15 to 24 (18% of Aboriginal males). About one in twenty Aboriginal females (5.1%) were aged 65 and older (4.5% of Aboriginal males).

Within the total female population of each province and territory, the three territories had the largest shares of Aboriginal people in the female population in 2006, followed by Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta. In Nunavut, 86% of women and girls reported an Aboriginal identity, as did 52% of females in the Northwest Territories and 26% in the Yukon. Among the provinces, Manitoba had the highest share of females with Aboriginal identity (16%), followed by Saskatchewan (15%) and Alberta (5.9%).

5. With the exception of the last section on religious affiliation and religiosity, the data in the remainder of this chapter are based on census data, unless otherwise specified.
6. Statistics Canada. 2005. *Projections of the Aboriginal populations, Canada, provinces and territories, 2001 to 2017*. Catalogue no. 91-547-XIE.
7. Statistics Canada. 2008. *Aboriginal Peoples in Canada in 2006: Inuit, Métis and First Nations, 2006 Census*. Catalogue no. 97-558-XIE.

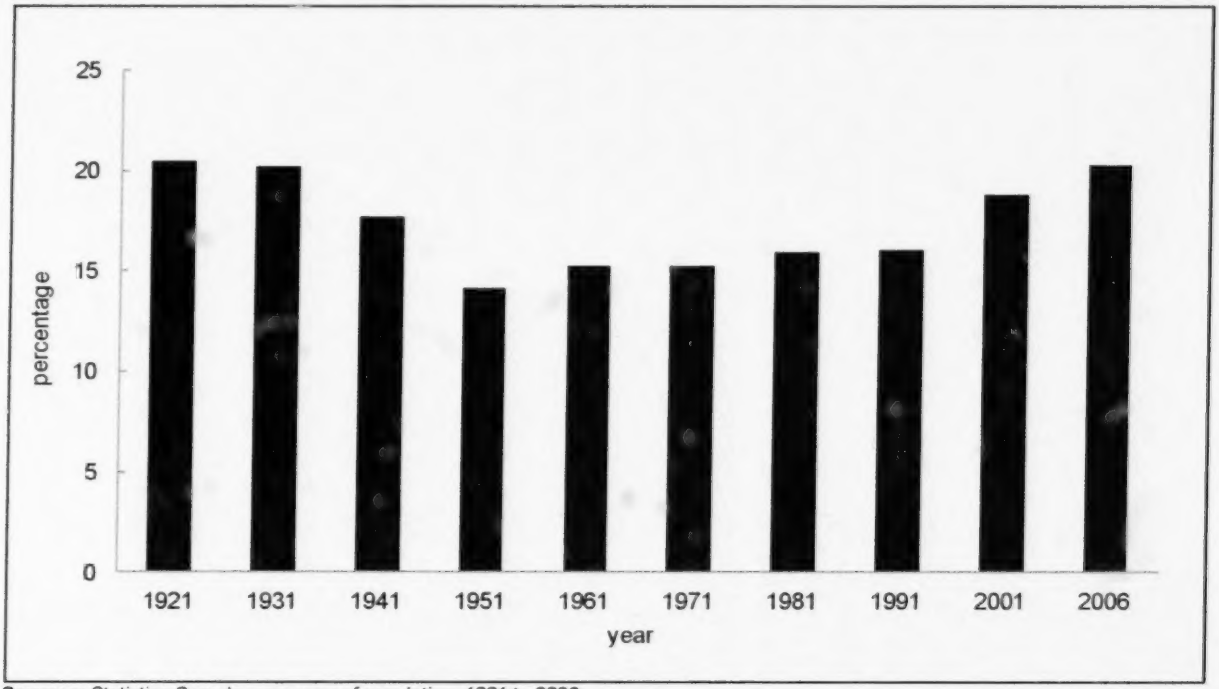
In 2006, most of the First Nations female population resided in Ontario, 23%, British Columbia, 18%, and Manitoba, 14%, while the Métis female population lived primarily in Alberta, (22%), Ontario (19%) and Manitoba (18%). Of the female population who identified as Inuit, close to half (48%) lived in Nunavut, 22% in Quebec and 9.2% in Newfoundland and Labrador.

More than half (55%) of Aboriginal women and girls lived in metropolitan areas, 25% on reserves and 20% in rural areas. See chapter on the Aboriginal female population for more information.

Immigrant status

Canada's female population is becoming more diverse over time. According to the 2006 Census, 3.2 million females, 20% of the total female population, were immigrants,[8] up from 19% in 2001 and 14% in 1951 (Chart 2). According to recent projections of the diversity of the Canadian population, and based on the reference scenario, the share of immigrant women and girls living in Canada could increase to 22% by 2011 and to 27% by 2031.[9] During the five years from 2001 to 2006, the female population who were immigrants grew 14%, more than twice the pace of Canada's total female population, 5.6%.

Chart 2
Immigrant females as a percentage of the total female population, Canada, 1921 to 2006



Sources: Statistics Canada, censuses of population, 1921 to 2006.

8. The census data used in this section are for the immigrant population, some of whom have resided in Canada for many years, while others have arrived recently. These data include a small number of immigrants born in Canada and exclude non-permanent residents.
9. Statistics Canada. Demography Division. Custom tabulation. The projected population is based on the immigrant population which excludes non-permanent residents and Canadians born abroad.

In 2006, census data showed that 18% of immigrant females had arrived in Canada during the previous five years, and another 27% during the years 1991 to 2000. About 55% of the immigrant female population had arrived prior to 1991. The distribution of the immigrant male population was similar.

Among the immigrant female population, the primary country of birth based on 2006 Census data was China, 7.9%. Asian and Middle Eastern countries were the primary region of birth, 41%, followed by Europe, 36%, Central and South America, the Caribbean and Bermuda, 12%, and Africa, 5.6%.

Of the 252,000 immigrants admitted to Canada in 2009, 52% were females.[10] Most immigrant women entering Canada in 2009 were admitted in the economic category (58%), which includes entering as principal applicants or accompanying dependants of skilled workers, business immigrants, live-in caregivers, or provincial/territorial nominees. The second largest category was the family class (29%) comprising spouses, partners, children and other relatives of Canadian residents, such as parents or grandparents, who are sponsored by family members or close relatives in Canada. Thirdly, refugees (8.6%) include government-assisted or privately sponsored refugees as well as refugees landed in Canada and dependents abroad. Finally, 'other immigrants' (4.2%) include those admitted for humanitarian, compassionate or public policy reasons, which can include holders of temporary resident permits, immigrants facing deferred removal orders and post-refugee claimants. The corresponding percentages for males were close to those for females: 64%, 22%, 9.5% and 4.3%.

Generation status can also be used as an indicator of the diversity of the population. Some females are born outside of Canada (first generation), some are born in Canada but have at least one parent born outside Canada (second generation) and some are born in Canada with both parents also born in Canada (third or higher generation).[11] Based on 2006 Census data, 60% of women aged 15 and older were born in Canada from two Canadian-born parents, 16% were Canadian-born with at least one parent born outside Canada, and 24% were born outside Canada. A similar pattern held for men. See chapter on the immigrant female population for more information.

Females belonging to visible minority groups

The 2006 Census counted 2.6 million females living in Canada who belonged to a visible minority group.[12] This represented 16% of all women and girls living in Canada, similar to the share of males (Table 6). The two largest groups among the females who reported a visible minority status in 2006 were Chinese and South Asian (24% each). The third largest group was Black (16%) followed by Filipina (9.0%). Arab and West Asian (7.6%), Latin American (6.0%) and Southeast Asian (4.7%).

10. Data in this paragraph is from Citizenship and Immigration Canada. 2010. *Facts and Figures 2009*.
11. In the 2006 Census, the first generation includes immigrants, non-permanent residents and a small number of people born outside Canada to parents who are Canadian citizens by birth. For more information, see the *2006 Census Dictionary*.
12. The term 'visible minority' is defined in the *Employment Equity Act* as "persons, other than Aboriginal people, who are non-Caucasian in race or non-white in colour." Under this definition, regulations specify the following as visible minority groups: Chinese, South Asians, Blacks, Arabs, West Asians, Filipinos, Southeast Asians, Latin Americans, Japanese, Koreans and other visible minority groups, such as Pacific Islanders.

Table 6
Population belonging to visible minority groups, Canada, 2006

Visible minority group	Females				Males		
	thousands	as a % of all females	as a % of all females who belong to a visible minority group	as a % of visible minority group	thousands	as a % of all males	as a % of all males who belong to a visible minority group
Chinese	632.3	4.0	24.3	52.0	584.3	3.8	23.7
South Asian	625.7	3.9	24.0	49.5	637.2	4.2	25.9
Black	408.1	2.6	15.7	52.1	375.7	2.5	15.2
Filipino	235.1	1.5	9.0	57.2	175.6	1.1	7.1
Latin American	156.3	1.0	6.0	51.4	147.9	1.0	6.0
Southeast Asian	123.5	0.8	4.7	51.5	116.4	0.8	4.7
Arab and West Asian	199.0	1.3	7.6	47.1	223.3	1.5	9.1
Korean	73.3	0.5	2.8	51.7	68.6	0.4	2.8
Japanese	45.1	0.3	1.7	55.5	36.2	0.2	1.5
Other visible minority	37.6	0.2	1.4	52.6	33.8	0.2	1.4
Multiple visible minority groups	68.1	0.4	2.6	51.1	65.1	0.4	2.6
Total visible minority population	**2,604.1**	**16.4**	**100.0**	**51.4**	**2,464.0**	**16.1**	**100.0**
Total non-visible minority population	**13,310.7**	**83.6**	...	...	**12,862.2**	**83.9**	...
Total population	**15,914.8**	**100.0**	...	...	**15,326.3**	**100.0**	...

Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Population, 2006.

Within specific visible minority groups, the share of females and males was comparable for some groups while for other groups, females were either overrepresented or underrepresented. For example, 57% of Filipinos were females, whereas among Arabs and West Asians, the female population represented 46% of the population.

The number of women and girls belonging to a visible minority group increased 28% from 2001 to 2006 while the female population who did not belong to a visible minority group rose 2.1%. In 2006, more than two-thirds (68%) of the female population reporting a visible minority status were immigrants, slightly higher than the corresponding percentage for males (65%). Immigration from non-European countries has risen, contributing to the increase in the visible minority population.

The proportion of immigrants varies among some of the visible minority groups. According to the 2006 Census, more than seven in ten females who were Chinese (74%), Arab or West Asians (73%), Latin American (73%), Filipina (72%) and Korean (71%) were immigrants. Much lower percentages of females who were Japanese (33%) and Black (55%) were immigrants, reflecting the long history of these groups in Canada.

The female population who belongs to visible minority groups is expected to increase which would increase ethno-cultural diversity in Canada. According to the reference scenario of the most recent projections of population diversity,[13] by 2011 there may be 3.4 million females in Canada who belong to a visible minority group, making up 20% of females living in Canada. By 2031, about 6.6 million females living in Canada, or 31%, may belong to a visible minority group. See chapter on the female population belonging to visible minority groups for more information.

13. Statistics Canada. Demography Division. Custom Tabulation.

Residential mobility

The distribution of women and girls living throughout Canada changes over time because of movement between provinces and territories as well as within them. In the five years from 2001 to 2006, 41% of females aged 5 years and older made at least one residential move—that is, they lived at a different address in 2006 than in 2001. This represents more than 6 million females in this age group who moved in the five years prior to the 2006 Census, similar to the pattern for males (Table 7).

Table 7
Residential moves within the previous five years, Canada, 2006

Move	Females		Males	
	thousands	%	thousands	%
Moved within same municipality[1]	3,326.7	22.1	3,181.2	22.0
Moved to a different municipality[1] within province	1,829.6	12.1	1,737.2	12.0
Moved between provinces/territories	426.9	2.8	425.7	2.9
External migrant	595.8	3.9	564.3	3.9
Total movers	**6,179.1**	**41.0**	**5,908.3**	**40.9**
Total non-movers	**8,906.8**	**59.0**	**8,550.4**	**59.1**
Total	**15,085.9**	**100.0**	**14,458.6**	**100.0**

1. Municipality is also known as a census subdivision.
Note: Population aged five years and older.
Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Population, 2006.

More than half (54%) of the females aged 5 and older who made a residential move within the five years prior to the 2006 Census did so within their same municipality. Thirty percent of females who moved did so to different municipalities but within the same province, almost 7% moved to different provinces, and almost 10% came from a different country. These proportions are similar among the male population. Women aged 25 to 34 years were the most mobile: 73% changed residence, compared with 26% or less of women aged 45 or older. Women in their late twenties and early thirties might move because of educational pursuits, employment opportunities or relationship formation, among other reasons.

Languages spoken

For most of Canada's females, their mother tongue—the language first learned and still understood—is one of the official languages, English or French. In 2006, 58% reported English as their mother tongue, and 22% reported French (Table 8). The pattern was similar among the male population. In 2006, an additional 20% of the female population, or 3.2 million women and girls, were 'allophones'—their mother tongue was neither English nor French. The number of allophone females rose 19% from 2001 to 2006, compared with 3.1% for those whose mother tongue was English and 1.7% for those whose mother tongue was French.

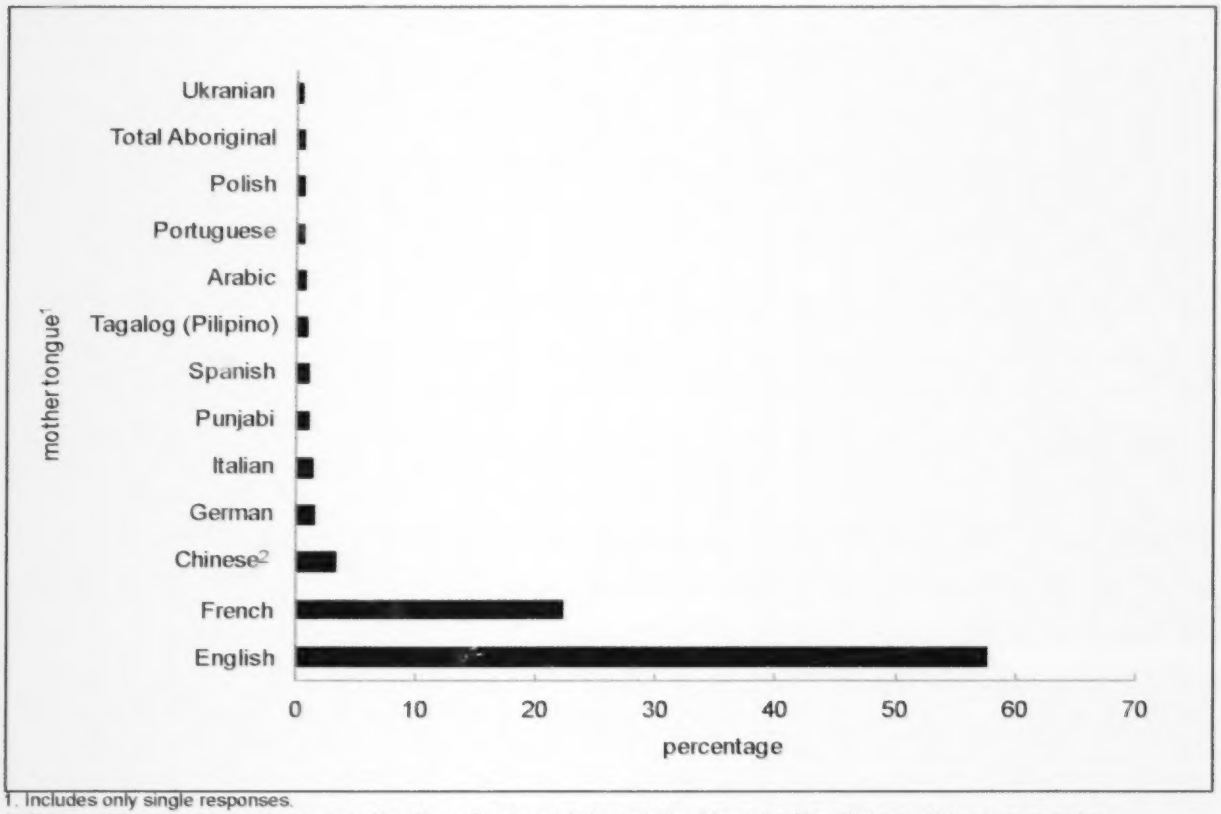
Table 8
Mother tongue, Canada, 2006

Mother tongue[1]	Females			Males		
	thousands	%	as a % change 2001 to 2006	thousands	%	as a % change 2001 to 2006
English	9,049.7	57.6	3.1	8,833.1	58.4	3.1
French	3,492.1	22.2	1.7	3,325.5	22.0	1.7
Non-official language	3,171.2	20.2	19.0	2,976.7	19.7	17.3
Total	**15,713.0**	**100.0**	...	**15,135.3**	**100.0**	...

1. Includes only single responses.
Sources: Statistics Canada, censuses of population, 2001 and 2006.

Among females whose mother tongue was neither English nor French, Chinese (a grouping of Mandarin, Cantonese, Hakka, Taiwanese and other Chinese languages) was predominant. More than half a million women and girls living in Canada, or 3.4% of the female population, reported a Chinese language as their mother tongue (Chart 3). Other non-official mother tongues, each with shares of 1.5% or less, included German, Italian, Punjabi and Spanish.

Chart 3
Percentage of the female population with selected mother tongues, Canada, 2006



1. Includes only single responses.
2. Chinese language includes Cantonese, Chaochow (Teochow), Fukien, Hakka, Mandarin, Shanghainese, Taiwanese and other.
Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Population, 2006.

Knowledge of official languages refers to the ability to conduct a conversation in one or both official languages. Most of the women and girls living in Canada in 2006, like most men and boys, spoke an official language, either English only (67%) or French only (14%); an additional 17% were bilingual—they could speak both English and French (Table 9). About 2% of the female population did not have sufficient knowledge of either English or French to conduct a conversation.

Table 9
Knowledge of official languages, Canada, 2006

Knowledge of official languages	Females			Males		
	thousands	%	as a % change 2001 to 2006	thousands	%	as a % change 2001 to 2006
English only	10,622.8	66.7	5.7	10,507.2	68.6	5.4
French only	2,226.6	14.0	4.7	1,915.3	12.5	5.2
English and French	2,750.0	17.3	4.6	2,698.9	17.6	3.7
Neither English nor French	315.4	2.0	16.1	204.9	1.3	17.4
Total	**15,914.8**	**100.0**	...	**15,326.3**	**100.0**	...

Sources: Statistics Canada, censuses of population, 2001 and 2006.

Similar to the pattern for mother tongue and knowledge of official languages, most females spoke only one language at home in 2006 (Table 10), predominantly English (66%), followed by French (21%) and non-official languages (11%). The most common non-official languages spoken at home in 2006 were Chinese languages (23%), followed by European languages such as Spanish, Italian and Portuguese (16%) then Indo-Aryan languages such as Punjabi, Urdu, Gujarati and Hindi (15%). However, almost 300,000 women and girls regularly spoke two or more languages at home, primarily English and a non-official language (206,000), English and French (about 49,700), French and a non-official language (30,000) and English, French plus a non-official language (8,400).

Table 10
Home language, Canada, 2006

Home language[1]	Females			Males		
	thousands	%	as a % growth 2001 to 2006	thousands	%	as a % growth 2001 to 2006
English	10,451.7	65.7	4.3	10,133.1	66.1	3.9
French	3,374.4	21.2	2.5	3,233.8	21.1	2.5
Non-official language	1,794.7	11.3	20.8	1,677.4	10.9	19.6
Other[2]	294.0	1.8	8.4	282.0	1.8	9.8
Total	**15,914.8**	**100.0**	...	**15,326.3**	**100.0**	...

1. Refers to the language most often spoken in the home.
2. Includes more than one language spoken at home.
Sources: Statistics Canada, censuses of population, 2001 and 2006.

Regardless of their knowledge of languages, 98% of women aged 15 years and older in Canada used only one language at work in 2006. Within the work environment, the language they used most was English, 76%, followed by French, 20%, and other non-official languages, 1.5%. Only 2% of women spoke more than one language at work, of which 123,500 spoke English and French. The percentages were similar for men.

Religious affiliation and religiosity[14]

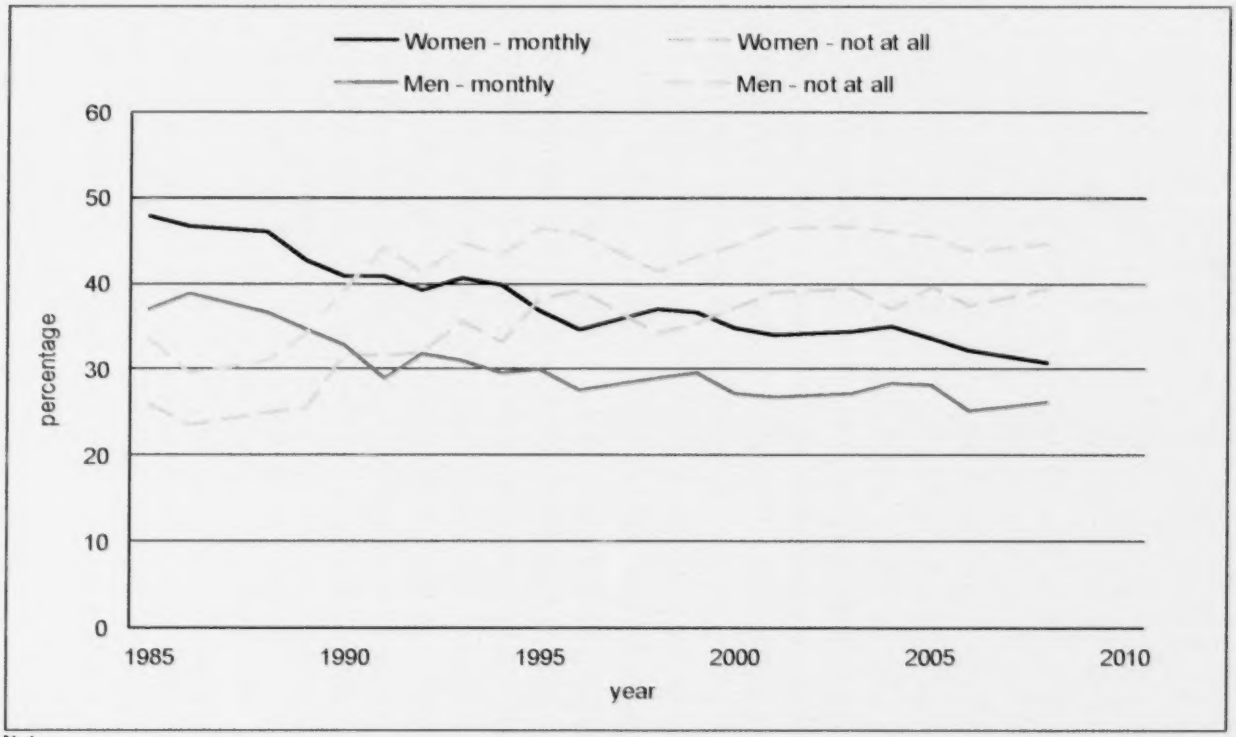
Most women in Canada have a religious affiliation. According to the 2008 General Social Survey, more than 11 million women aged 15 years and older reported being affiliated with a particular religious group, as did close to 10 million men. In 2008, 40% of all women identified themselves as Catholic, 24% as one of the other Christian denominations such as United Church, Anglican, Presbyterian, Lutheran Baptist, or Christian Orthodox. About 5% of women in Canada reported affiliation with Muslim, Jewish, Buddhist, Hindu, or Sikh religions.

The proportion of people reporting no religious affiliation has been gradually rising, among both women and men. In 2003, 16% of women aged 15 years and older reported no religious affiliation; by 2008, that share rose to 20%. A higher proportion of men reported no religious affiliation: 22% in 2003 and 26% in 2008. However, when asked if their religious or spiritual beliefs were important in the way they live their life, 42% of women responded in 2008 that it was "very important", as did 31% of men; 13% of women and 21% of men indicated that "it was not important at all."

Women's attendance at religious services has been decreasing over the past two decades. In 2008, 31% of women attended a religious service at least once a month, down from 37% in 1998 and 46% in 1988 (Chart 4). A higher percentage of women than men attended religious services at least monthly. For men, their attendance fell from 37% in 1988 to 26% in 2008.

14. Data in this section are from the General Social Survey.

Chart 4
Religious attendance in the previous 12 months, Canada, 1985 to 2008



Notes:
"Monthly" refers to attendance at religious services at least once a month during the previous 12 months. "Not at all" indicates not attending religious services at all during the previous 12 months. Prior to 2005, the General Social Survey did not ask those who had no religious affiliation about the frequency of attending religious services and they were assumed to have not attended. In 2006 and 2008, all respondents were asked about frequency of attendance. In 2008, about 80% of those with no religious affiliation did not attend and 16% attended infrequently.
Sources: Statistics Canada, General Social Survey, 1985 to 2008.

Religious attendance also varies by age with higher attendance for older age groups than younger age groups. For women aged 15 to 29 years, 23% attended a religious service once a month or more which differed little from men in this age group. For women and men aged 60 years and older, the percentages were 45% and 38%, respectively.